

Risk Factors

- **Age**
77% of all cancers are diagnosed in people 55 and older.
- **Genetics**
About 5% of all cancers are hereditary.
- **Race/Ethnicity**
- **Gender**
- **Nutrition/Obesity**
1/3 of cancer deaths may be related to overweight or obesity, physical inactivity and nutrition.
- **Environment**
Using protection from the sun and avoiding indoor tanning could have prevented the over 1 million skin cancer diagnoses in 2008.
- **Tobacco use**
Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among both men and women in the U.S.
- **Secondhand smoke**
Around 3,000 lung cancer deaths among nonsmokers in the U.S. each year are caused by second-hand smoke.
- **Alcohol abuse**
Excessive drinking of alcohol (more than one drink a day for women and two for men) increases the risk of colorectal and breast cancers.

Resources

American Cancer Society
1-800-227-2345
www.cancer.org

For help with quitting smoking in San Diego:
1-800-NOBUTTS
www.nobutts.org

Introduction to

Cancer



Cancer covers a group of diseases that involve the uncontrolled growth and spread of abnormal cells. Cancer is caused by external factors such as environmental conditions, radiation, infectious organisms and tobacco, and internal factors such as genetics, mutations and hormones.

Facts

- Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the U.S.
- In the U.S., men have around a 1 in 2 lifetime risk of developing cancer, while women have around a 1 in 3 risk. Lifetime risk is the probability that a person, over the course of a lifetime, will be develop or die from cancer.
- About 1,437,180 new cancer cases were diagnosed in the U.S. in 2008.



For more information and data, go to
www.SDHealthStatistics.com

Community Health Statistics Unit:
619-285-6479

Prevention

• Stop smoking

The longer the duration and higher the level of exposure to tobacco smoke, the greater the risk of developing lung cancer.

• Protect your skin from the sun

Always use sunscreen with at least SPF 15 when spending time in direct sunlight.

• Proper diet/physical activity

Eating five servings of fruits and vegetables can help prevent many types of cancers.

• Early detection/screenings

-**Colonoscopies:** routine screenings after the age of 50.

-**Mammograms:** mammograms should be performed every one to two years for women 40 years of age and older.

-**Pap tests:** yearly tests for women 21 years of age and older.

- **Cancer vaccines:** can be used to treat or prevent certain types of cancer.

